

To be treated as strictly CONFIDENTIAL and NOT to be published or broadcast before -

Evening Newspapers - Monday, 14th May, 1962

Morning Newspapers - Tuesday, 15th May, 1962

Broadcasting and Television - 11 a.m., Monday, 14th May, 1962

RETAIL PRICES AND BASIC WAGE RATES - MARCH QUARTER, 1962

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

The Consumer Price Index measures quarterly for each capital city separately the variations in prices of commodities and services as affecting a high proportion of the expenditure of wage-earner households. Commodities and services included in the index are food, clothing, drapery, home ownership, rent of privately owned and government owned houses, fuel, light, household appliances and supplies, fares, motoring, tobacco, cigarettes, beer, cinema, radio and television licenses, newspapers, postal and telephone services, hairdressing, dry cleaning, and various other items.

The various commodities and services have been combined into groups, and group indexes are available for Food, Clothing and Drapery, Housing, Household Supplies and Equipment, and Miscellaneous.

The indexes measure price movements in each city individually. They do not provide a comparison of the retail price level in any city with the retail price level of any other city. The base of the index for each capital city and for the weighted average, six capitals, is year 1952-53 = 100.0. Group indexes also have separate bases for each group.

The Brisbane Consumer Price Index rose to 127.7 in March quarter, 1962, from 127.1 in December quarter, 1961, an increase of 0.5 per cent. compared with an increase in the previous quarter of 0.1 per cent. The increase over the year ended March, 1962, was 0.8 per cent.

The Food Group was mainly responsible for the higher All Groups index. Increased prices for meat, bread, flour, eggs, and ice cream were principally responsible for the group index movement from 129.7 to 131.4, an increase of 1.3 per cent.

There was a very slight upward movement in the Clothing and Drapery Group index during the quarter. The index number rose from 116.7 to 116.8.

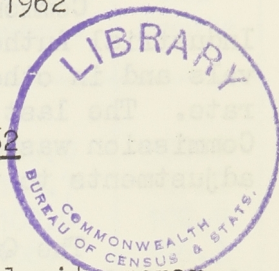
In the Housing Group there was little movement during March quarter, 1962, but small rent increases resulted in the index rising from 140.2 to 140.3.

There were no significant price changes for individual items in the Household Supplies and Equipment Group, but a number of small price increases combined to increase the index by 0.3 per cent., from 112.9 to 113.2.

In the Miscellaneous Group higher beer prices were partly offset by lower motor car prices, and these changes, combined with other minor increases, resulted in a small rise in the index from 134.0 to 134.3.

Only Brisbane and Perth recorded an increase in the retail price level during the quarter, while the most significant decreases were in Hobart and Melbourne. Percentage variations from December quarter, 1961, were as follows:- Brisbane, +0.5; Perth, +0.2; Sydney, -0.1; Adelaide, -0.3; Melbourne, -0.5; and Hobart, -0.6. The weighted average decrease for the six capitals was 0.2 per cent.

Since the base year, 1952-53, Brisbane has shown a relatively greater increase in retail prices than other capital cities while the smallest increase has occurred in Perth. Percentage increases from 1952-53 to March quarter, 1962, are as follows:- Brisbane, 27.7; Hobart, 27.5; Melbourne, 25.9; Sydney, 22.4; Adelaide, 22.1; and Perth, 21.5.



COMMONWEALTH AND STATE BASIC WAGE RATES

Commonwealth and State basic wage rates are reviewed by the appropriate Industrial Authorities from time to time - in some cases at fairly regular intervals and in others as a result of special applications for variation of the wage rate. The last variation made by the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission was an addition of 12s. to the male basic wage with corresponding adjustments to the female and juvenile rates and operated from 7th July, 1961.

The Queensland Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act of 1961 abolished automatic quarterly reviews of the basic wage, but the Industrial Commission was empowered to vary the wage after a general hearing as a result of applications by interested parties. An application from employers' organisations asking that the basic wage should not be reviewed "merely by reason of any change in the Consumer Price Index, at intervals of less than twelve months" was refused by the Commission in a decision handed down on 28th November, 1961. An application seeking an increase in the basic wage has been filed by employees' organisations but, to date, no hearing has been sought. The last variation to the basic wage made by the Commission was an increase of 4s. for males and 3s. for females operative from 29th May, 1961.

Current Commonwealth and State basic wage rates are shown in the following table.

Basic Wage Rates - Australian Capital Cities

Capital City	Commonwealth Basic Wage			State Basic Wage		
	Males	Females	Date of Operation ^a	Males	Females	Date of Operation
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	
Brisbane ..	13 10 0	10 2 6	7.7.61	14 4 0	10 13 0	29. 5.61
Sydney ..	14 15 0	11 1 0	7.7.61	15 0 0	11 5 0	1. 2.62a
Melbourne	14 7 0	10 15 0	7.7.61	14 7 0	10 15 0	July, 61b
Adelaide ..	14 3 0	10 12 0	7.7.61	14 3 0	10 12 0	10. 7.61a
Perth ..	14 8 0	10 16 0	7.7.61	14 18 9	11 4 1	30.10.61
Hobart ..	14 14 0	11 0 6	7.7.61	14 14 0	11 0 6	July, 61b

a From the first pay period commencing on or after the date shown.

b Most Wages Boards adopted the Commonwealth rate during July, 1961.

S. E. SOLOMON
DEPUTY COMMONWEALTH STATISTICIAN
AND GOVERNMENT STATISTICIAN

320-330 Adelaide Street,
BRISBANE

11th May, 1962

Consumer Price Index - Total and Group Indexes - Brisbane
(Year 1952-53 = 100.0)

Period			Food	Clothing and Drapery	Housing	Household Supplies and Equipment	Miscell- aneous	All Groups
Year -								
1952-53	..	..	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1953-54	..	..	103.4	100.9	101.6	101.7	101.7	102.0
1954-55	..	..	104.1	101.3	104.7	102.5	102.0	102.9
1955-56	..	..	107.7	102.2	110.5	102.6	108.0	106.3
1956-57	..	..	111.5	104.7	118.4	106.5	118.9	112.0
1957-58	..	..	113.0	107.8	123.9	108.3	120.5	114.4
1958-59	..	..	119.8	109.4	128.4	109.0	123.6	118.2
1959-60	..	..	124.2	111.9	132.6	110.6	125.6	121.2
1960-61	..	..	130.4	115.1	137.6	111.3	129.5	125.4
Quarter -								
1961 - March	..		134.0	115.3	138.4	111.5	129.7	126.7
June	..		130.5	116.1	139.0	112.3	130.3	126.1
September	..		132.5	116.3	139.7	113.0	130.7	127.0
December	..		129.7	116.7	140.2	112.9	134.0	127.1
1962 - March	..		131.4	116.8	140.3	113.2	134.3	127.7
Percentage Increase or Decrease (-) on Previous Quarter								
Quarter -								
1961 - March	..		3.1	0.3	1.0	0.7	0.2	1.3
June	..		-2.6	0.7	0.4	0.7	0.5	-0.5
September	..		1.5	0.2	0.5	0.6	0.3	0.7
December	..		-2.1	0.3	0.4	-0.1	2.5	0.1
1962 - March	..		1.3	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.2	0.5

Consumer Price Index - Capital Cities
(Year 1952-53 = 100.0 for Each City and for Six Capitals)

As the base for each city is 100.0, the indexes in the table below do not indicate relative price levels as between cities, but they may be used to compare relative price movements in the various cities.

Period		Sydney	Melbourne	Brisbane	Adelaide	Perth	Hobart	Weighted Average, Six Capitals
Year -								
1952-53	..	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1953-54	..	101.6	102.0	102.0	102.3	103.0	105.0	102.0
1954-55	..	102.3	102.0	102.9	103.5	105.2	104.9	102.6
1955-56	..	105.7	108.1	106.3	106.9	107.9	110.2	106.9
1956-57	..	112.9	114.0	112.0	111.1	112.9	116.9	113.1
1957-58	..	114.5	114.4	114.4	111.9	113.6	117.0	114.2
1958-59	..	115.3	116.6	118.2	114.5	114.7	118.7	116.0
1959-60	..	117.8	120.0	121.2	118.0	116.9	120.8	118.9
1960-61	..	122.1	125.9	125.4	122.9	121.2	127.5	123.8
Quarter -								
1961 - March	..	122.5	126.1	126.7	123.4	121.9	128.3	124.2
June	..	123.4	127.1	126.1	124.3	122.4	128.9	125.0
September	..	123.1	126.8	127.0	123.5	121.7	129.1	124.8
December	..	122.5	126.5	127.1	122.5	121.3	128.3	124.3
1962 - March	..	122.4	125.9	127.7	122.1	121.5	127.5	124.1